

19 June 1981

IHSA 81-010

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

FROM:

[redacted]
Systems Analyst/Information Handling
Systems Architect/DDA

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SUBJECT:

Federal ADP Users Group Meeting, "Five
Key Problem Areas in Automated Information
Systems"

1. On 17 June 1981, [redacted] ODP Management Staff, and the undersigned attended the Federal ADP Users Group Meeting at GSA Region 3 Auditorium. Dr. Harold J. Poddell, Mission Analysis and Systems Acquisition Division, General Accounting Office, presented his briefing, "Five Key Problem Areas in Automated Information Systems".
2. Dr. Poddell immediately qualified his remarks were not policy statements from GAO, but were his own insights and experiences relating to his auditing of ADP systems in the federal government. GAO to date has written over 250 reports on the auditing of computer systems. He remarked that the GAO report, AFMD-81-20, dated February 20, 1981, discusses GAO guidelines for the implementation of computer systems.
3. In his auditing role, Dr. Poddell stated that his own area of expertise dealt with the examination of Command and Control Systems. Typically, he performs a "survey", i.e., he listens to the people who are willing to discuss the problems of the system and then he conducts a "review", i.e., a written report identifying problems and making recommendations. The five key questions that he presents to the managers of the Command and Control Systems that helps him identify problem areas are listed below. The discussion of his recent audit of NORAD's computer system was used to exemplify the meaning of each question.

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QUESTION #1: Where are the long range guidance documents that translate into the computer system requirements and functional specifications?

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Federal ADP Users Group Meeting, "Five Key Problem Areas in Automated Information Systems" (continued)

QUESTION #2: Was there an analysis by a third disinterested party (particularly not users nor system implementors) of the computer system?

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QUESTION #3: If the data is going to be shared by 2 or more users, have there been adequate provisions made to support this sharing?

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QUESTION #4: In putting this project together, was there adequate provisions allowed for completion of each phase?

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Federal ADP Users Group Meeting, "Five Key Problem Areas in Automated Information Systems" (continued)

QUESTION #5: Was a realistic cost/benefit analysis made before the implementation of the system? Dr. Poddell's emphasis here was not comparing the new system with the old system. He cited that computers have had a benefit/price ratio of a \$1000/\$1, so in comparison of the old system with a new system, the cost/benefit analysis will always justify replacing the old computer system with the new. What he was particularly interested in, was to see if cost/benefit analysis had been made by comparing new systems with alternative new systems or the old systems with modifications of the old systems.



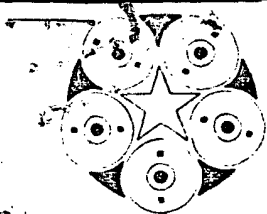
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federal ADP users group

CAPITAL REGION

Career Development and Training • ADP Security and Auditing • ADP Procurement • ADP Standards/Quality Assurance
Telecommunications • Information Resources Management • Small Computers in the Office • Financial Management
Project Management and User Involvement

JUNE 1981—GENERAL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

ADP Project Management Special Interest Group presents:

SUBJECT: Five Key Problem Areas in Automated Information Systems

SPEAKER: Dr. Harold J. Poddell, Mission Analysis and Systems Acquisition Division, General Accounting Office

SYNOPSIS: Dr. Poddell evaluates on-line computer systems in federal agencies; specifically systems addressing command and control, intelligence and computer security. Dr. Poddell will share with us the key problem areas he has identified in automated information systems and provide us with guidance for effectively dealing with these problem areas.

DATE: Wednesday, June 17, 1981

TIME: 9:30-11:00 a.m.

PLACE: GSA Region 3 Auditorium, 7th & D Streets, S.W., Washington, DC

PARKING: On-street parking around GSA/Region 3 Building is limited; pay parking is available at the following locations: (1) L'Enfant Plaza Garage; (2) Commercial lots on C St., S.W. between 6th and 7th Streets, S.W.; (3) Smithsonian Air & Space Museum Garage, entrance on 7th Street, S.W.

SUBWAY: BLUE LINE subway stop at "L'Enfant Plaza," use the "L'Enfant Plaza exit; 2 rights at the top of the escalator, GSA is across the street; the auditorium is in the middle of the building.

ELECTIONS

Due to delay in getting out all the ballots, the elections were extended to June 5th. The results will be announced at the June 17th General Meeting.



Graduate School, USDA • Suite 277 National Press Building, 529-14th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20045 (202) 447-3247

